

"Piece By Piece -- Bethphage and Bethany!"

Text: Mark 11:11, "And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple; and when He had looked round about upon all things, and now the evening was coming, He went out unto Bethany with the twelve."
Scripture: Mark 11:1-11

We have now come to the last stages of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. We have traveled with Him thus far starting at Tyre & Sidon, through the Decapolis, to Dalmanutha, to Bethsaida, on to Caesarea Philippi, down through Galilee, to Capernaum, to Judea, to Jericho and now to Jerusalem and the small towns surrounding it. ~~xx~~ All of this now stretches behind Jesus and behind us like some huge roadmap or as a giant puzzle. Each piece has been examined and looked at in the light of the importance it played in the life of Jesus.

In our scripture this morning we read that He came near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage, and Bethany near the Mount of Olives. Jesus had been here before, and if we ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ have only read Matthew Mark and Luke there is a tendency to suppose that Jesus had just come to this area and Jerusalem for the first time. But if we read the Gospel of John we get a clearer picture that tells of Jesus making at least three Passovers in Jerusalem. So He is in familiar territory. In particular He is at home in Bethany which was only 1 5/8 miles East of Jerusalem and was the ~~xx~~ home of His friends Lazarus, Mary and Martha. The name Bethany meant "House of Dates," and the other small town which was just a little further East, was called Bethphage and its name meant, "House of Figs." Thus two fruits which seem to go together in our thinking, were the names of two small villages ^{through} ~~xx~~ which Jesus passed on His last trip to Jerusalem.

Our Scripture for this morning is the very familiar scripture of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem astride a lowly donkey. Yet, I wonder how many of us have ever pondered the wording spoken by the people as He passed by? We sing the words in the Seraphic Hymn at our Communion services. ~~xxx~~ We read, (vs 9) "And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna!" Now this word in Hebrew is HOSHI AH NA. If you notice in your Bibles, the word Hosanna is followed by an exclamation point. This is significant because first of all it is not followed by a comma, and thus, ^{IT} ~~is~~ ^{NOT} ~~a~~ part of the following wording. But it is followed by an exclamation point, meaning that

it is first ~~being~~ something that is being exclaimed. And second that it is separate and distinct from that which follows. The reason for this, is because this exclamation appears in what is known as the Hallel and it was sung at both the Passover and the Feast of the Tabernacles. It is taken from the 118th Psalm, verse 25 which reads, "Save now, I beseech thee O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity." The word Hosanna meant, "Save Now." It meant praise which is how we read it, but it meant much more than that. It was used by the people seeking help and protection at the hands of the king. So when these people stood shouting Hosanna, it was really a cry to God to break in and to save His people now that the Messiah had come.

At this particular point in His ministry, Jesus is not being questioned who He was, and by what authority did He do this. Instead, He is being acclaimed with a positiveness that has been lacking all along. People questioned all that He did and why it was done. This has been the story of Jesus Christ right on down to our own age and day.

In 1943 Eve Curie wrote a book entitled "Journeys Among Warriors," in which she questioned this Jesus. She wrote, "You told us to be kind and forgiving, but for twenty solid centuries, wretched, incorrigible men have gone on being merciless, full of violence and of hatred. Religious men and atheists alike have lived and ruled in a non-Christian way -- and look at us now: we've never been in a worse mess."

People still question today, "Who is this Jesus?" He is not universally accepted because He is too simple, too common. Make Him into something complex and incomprehensible, and people can accept Him. Strange as it seems people are more willing to accept things that are complex than they are to accept something simple and childlike. And this is what this Jesus Christ was and is.

But there is also another ~~portion~~ of verse in this scripture which is often overlooked. It is the 11th verse, (READ). We read first of all that after He has arrived in Jerusalem He went to the Temple. Here for Jesus was the place ~~that~~ where men were supposed to find the presence of God. Here was a spot that should have been hallowed and holy. A spot that was set apart from

the rest of the world. Here was the sanctuary to which men were supposed to be able to come to and worship Almighty God. Here ¹⁵ ~~it was to~~ where Jesus came at the end of the day. ~~xxxxxxeveningxxshadowsxxlengthened~~ In the late afternoon hours, as it began to dawn toward evening, Jesus came to this place of rest and comfort.

He had deliberately plotted and planned His course of action much as a field general will maneuver and plot the future battles that lead to victory. Jesus had ministered and preached throughout much of this area and He was now deliberately set on a course that could only clash with those in power. So it was only natural that He should come to the Temple for a few quiet moments to be in His Father's House.

But it is also significant that He came here to look over the field of combat, before He made His move. It was too late in the day to accomplish His task, and so He merely sized up the situation and retired for the night to his friends in Bethany. Perhaps the vendors stalls were shut down, or in the process of being shutdown, and the efforts to throw them out of the Temple would only be wasted on a few merchants. Better to wait until the morning when things were in full swing. That way He could do the job properly and show all of the vendors that He was lashing out at the commercialism they had brought into the organized Church.

This verse shows again that wonderful quality of Jesus as we pointed out the other night. When Jesus was about 15 miles from Jerusalem and in Jericho, he dealt with the blind man Bartimaeus. And we read that He stood still. He paused in His schedule to minister to the needs of someone who needed help. Here in the Temple we find Him taking His time to pause and to "look round about upon all things." He wasn't content to go by hearsay, or by rumor that the Temple had been turned into a commercial venture. He took time to see for Himself. And when he had satisfied Himself by seeing what He wanted to see we read that He went out to Bethany with the twelve. Now here was one of the last times that He was able to spend a quiet evening with His friends and disciples. Starting the next day, His life took on the

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA
FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT MARCH 16, 1975
REV. RALPH C. LINK, PASTOR
MRS. EUGENE STEPHENSON, ORGANIST
MRS. ROBERT SYBERT, YOUTH CHOIR DIRECTOR
PATTY BASEMORE, JEFF CAMPRELL - ACOLYTES

ORDER OF WORSHIP 11:00 A.M.
PRELUDE MUSIC: "JESUS, WORD OF GOD INCARNATE" MOZART
 "QUANDO CORPUS" PERGOLESI

SILENT PRAYER
*PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 72 "NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD"
*ASCRPTION - CHORAL AMEN
*EXHORTATION
*CONFESSION (IN UNISON) "MOST HOLY AND MOST GRACIOUS GOD,
WHO TURNST THE SHADOW OF NIGHT INTO MORNING, SATISFY US
EARLY WITH THY MERCY, THAT WE MAY REJOICE AND BE GLAD ALL
THE DAY. LIFT THE LIGHT OF THY COUNTENANCE UPON US; CALM
EVERY TROUBLED THOUGHT; AND GUIDE OUR FEET INTO THE WAY
OF PEACE. PERFECT THY STRENGTH IN OUR WEAKNESS, AND HELP
US TO WORSHIP THEE; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN."
*KYRIE (CHOIR, CONGREGATION AND PASTOR)
*ASSURANCE OF PARDON - CHORAL AMEN
*PRAISE
*PASTOR: O LORD OPEN OUR LIPS.
*PEOPLE: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHOW FORTH THY PRAISE
*DOXOLOGY No. 551
SCRIPTURE: MARK 11: 1-11
HYMN No. 149 "THERE IS A GREEN HILL FAR AWAY"
*AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH (APOSTLES' CREED)
*GLORIA PATRI
*CALL TO PRAYER
*PASTOR: THE LORD BE WITH YOU.
*PEOPLE: AND WITH THY SPIRIT.
*PASTOR: LET US PRAY.
*PRAYER AND PRAYER RESPONSE
OFFERING
OFFERTORY: "BESIDE STILL WATERS" CLARKE
BAPTISM OF INFANT
THEM: "TELL ME OH HUMBLE GRASS" JUNIOR CHOIR

SERMON: "PIECE BY PIECE - BETHPHAGE AND BETHANY"
PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

*HYMN OF DEDICATION No. 472 "WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN
JESUS"

*BENEDICTION AND THREE FOLD AMEN JESUS"

POSTLUDE: "THE LORD IS MY ROCK" OTIS

----- *CONGREGATION STANDING -----
THE LOVELY FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR HAVE BEEN PLACED BY
THE WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP TO THE "GLORY OF GOD"

SERVING AS USHERS TODAY ARE: *DAVE CURTIS, ROBERT
DELLEN, BRIAN PFARE, STEVE SMITH, CHRIS PFARDI.

PRES. AND MRS. ROLAND THOMPSON WILL REPRESENT COUNCIL
AT THE DOOR TODAY.

NURSERY WILL BE PROVIDED TODAY BY: MRS. CARL HOLLEFREUD
SUE HOLLEFREUD AND JEAN FENCIL.

FOUR CRIBS HAVE BEEN SET UP FOR YOUR USE, IF WE FILL
THEM ADDITIONAL ONES WILL BE PURCHASED - SECOND FLOOR
OVER OFFICES. NURSERY WILL BE IN NEXT ROOM ON A TRIAL
BASIS.

THE ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY WAS 218; WED. - NO RECORD.
MON. - 7:30 - FIDELITY BIBLE CLASS.

NO SERVICE HERE AT ST. PAUL'S ON WED. SO THAT YOU
MAY HAVE ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR THE REV. WILLIAM
MCLEOD, WHO WILL BE PREACHING AT THE CALVARY CHURCH
ON THE DIAMOND ALL THIS WEEK WITH THE EXCEPTION OF
SATURDAY.

THE FOLLOWING WEEK - HOLY WEEK - WED - 7:30 - PREPARATO
SERVICE "EPHRAIM"; THURSDAY - HOLY COMMUNION AND
THE RECEPTION FOR NEW MEMBERS WILL FOLLOW SERVICE;
(THE CONGREGATION IS INVITED TO THE UNDERCROFT);
GOOD FRIDAY - 7:30 HOLY COMMUNION.

NEXT SUNDAY IS PALM SUNDAY - NEW MEMBERS WILL BE
RECEIVED AT THIS TIME.

BAPTIZED TODAY: DOUGLAS EUGENE VENSEL, SON OF
MR. & MRS. BERNARD VENSEL - BORN FEB. 5, 1975.

GOOD FRIDAY BREAKFAST - FOR WOMEN - YWCA AUDITORIUM,
7:30 A.M. \$2.50 PER PERSON - RESERVATIONS ARE
REQUIRED - 300 CAPACITY. CONTEMPORARY EASTER PLAY.

GOOD FRIDAY BREAKFAST - FOR MEN - YMCA AUDITORIUM -
6:00 A.M. - J. W. HARMON AND KENNETH WEITZEL - TICKETS.

YOUTH FELL. - ARE DISPLAYING STATIONARY-ORDERS-SIGN-UP.
YOUTH ARE SAVING - EMPTY TOWEL & TOILET PAPER ROLLS.

PALM SUN. - 4:00 - SACRED CONCERT - BUTLER SYMPHONY
CHOIR - 1ST METHODIST CHURCH.

ARC. ATT. 4 WORK KIT 6:30 - BRING EQUIP.

Strange as seems peop mor will accept things
 complex than they R accept sumthin simpl childlike
 & this wat Js Xp was & is
 t alsoanother vs this scrip over look
 (READ 11th VS)
 Read 1st after arriv Jeru He went Temp
 Here 4 Js was place men suppos find pres of G
 r was spot shud B hallow Holy/set apart from wor
 " " sanc 2 which men suppos B abl cum wor G
 " where Js came end of day/late aft hrs as Bgan
 dawn 2ward eve/He came 2 this place rest & Cor
 He delib plot, plan like field gen plot, plan field
 battles
 Js minis, preach thruout much area & now delib set
 on collision corse those in power
 So only naturHe shud cum 2 Temp 4 few quiet moment
 But also signif He cam look over field combat B4
 mak move
 2 late day 2 mak move, accomp task, so merely size
 up situat & retire 4 nite with friends Bethany
 Perhaps vendors stalls shut down or B shut down,
 & efforts throw out of Temp wasted on few merchant
 Better 2 wait until morn things full swing,
 that way do job proper show all vends He lash out
 gainst all commercialism they brot in2 organ Church
 This vs show wonderful qual Js as pt out other nite
 When Js Jericho delt blind Bartimaeus,
 we red, "HE STOOD STILL"/He pause in sched 2 help
 sum1 need help,
 Here inTemp He pause tak time "2 look round about
 upon all things."
 He no content go by hearsay, rumor that Temp comm
 " took time 2 C 4 self & wen satis self by C
 wat came 2 C He went Beth with 12
 Here last time able spend quiet eve friends & discip
 Start next day life took aspects turmoil strife
 He wud know no peace, quiet until arise from grave
 So spent last eve among those whom He loved
 I oft wonder wen Js look Temp 2day wat He C?
 Don't mean old Jew Temp Jeru, that long gone destro
 & not 1 stone on nother as Js predict & promised
 I mean Temp of G which in each of us,
 P tell us 6 chap 1st Cor, our Bodies Temp of G
 & just as surely as Js stood physic in Temp Jeru,
 so He stand spiritu in Temps which U & I.
 & as He survey scene B4 Him, wonder if He feeld
 sam discourag & sadness must felt wen stood in
 other temp?
 (ILLUST. preacher & dead church)

"Piece By Piece -- Bethphage and Bethany!"
 Text: Mark 11:11, "And Jesus entered into Jerusalem,
 and into the Temple; and when He had looked round
 about upon all things, and now the evening was comin
 He went out unto Bethany with the twelve."
 Scr(ture: Mark 11:1-11
 Now at last stgs Js jorn 2 Jeru
 Hav trav from Tyre-Sidon, thru Decap, 2 Dalmanutha,
 2 Bethsaida, on 2 Caesar-Phil, dwn thru Gal, 2 Cape
 2 Judea, 2 Jericho & now Jeru & sm towns round it
 All stretch behind like giant puzz or rd map
 Ea pce exam in lit of import in Js life
 Script read He cam near Jeru 2 Bthphage-Bethany
 He here B4/if only red Mt, Mk, Lk think Jeru only 1ce
 If read Jn C He here 3 Passovs.
 He in famil terri, in partic at home in Bethany
 Beth 1 5/8 mi E Jeru, home friends Laz, Mary, Mart
 " house of dates, Bethphage hse figs
 Thus 2 fruits seem go 2gether our think, really
 2gether as villages near Jeru
 Scrip this AM very famil & triumph entry Jeru on Don
 Yet, wonder how many ponder word spok by peop?
 We sing in Sera Him at commun
 (READ VS 9) Hosanna in Heb is HOSHI - AH - Na.
 If notice Bib Hos follow by exclam pt,
 this signif Bcause no comma & thus separate from f
 Sumthing B exclam/separate & distinct
 Reason 4 this itexclam as in HALLEL sung at Pass &
 Feast of Tabernacles
 It from 118 Ps. vs 25 & reads, "SAVE NOW, I BE-
 SE I THEE O LORD, I BESSECH THEE, SEND NOW PROSPER-
 ITI."
 Word Hosanna meant "Save Now",
 it ment praise which is how we redd it, but it
 mean mor than that,
 It used by peop seek help protect at hands of Kin
 When peop shout Hos, it cry 2 G 2 break in &
 save His peop now Messiah had cum
 At this partic time Hist Js no quest who He was,
 & wat author He do this,
 Insted, He B acclaim with positivness lack B4
 Peop quest all He did & why it dun,
 this been story Js rt up 2 2day
 (I'us. Eve Curia)
 A p still ask 2day, "who this Js?"
 He no univers accept Bcause He 2 simpl, 2 common
 Mak Him in2 sumthing complex & incomprehensible
 & peop can accept Him

Perhaps this speak 2 truly much church 2day, 3/
& of temp that in ea us
He rode majestic in2 Jeru on lowly beaat burden
ong yrs ago.

He acclaimed king He rtfully ~~is & was~~ WAS 8/15.

He paused in midst temp & surveyed there the s
cene stetched out B4 Him

I Blieve in this scrip we can read & C that which
symbolic

I Blieve we need permit King 2 ride in majesty in2
our very harts & lives

But I also Blieve we need open indiuid temps 2 Him
& ~~look deep within~~ let Him look deep within

We need 2 let Him cleanse & purify us, just as

He tried 2 do in Jeru next day

(Illust drunken man in depths)

This man permitted 2 look into his temp & have opp
change it & cleanse it.

HOW ABOUT US?

Js is "LOOKING ROUND ABOUT, UPON ALL THINGS IN
OUR TEMPLES."

Have we reached the pt where we can truly acclaim
Him with our Hosannas, Bcause our Temps are in order

Or do we need 2 do sum private temple clean of own?

Now is a good time 2 do so while Js is waiting
patiently ~~within~~ 2 B acclaimed & 2 Blong within
ea of us.

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
 Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
 Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.